A

PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENT

Of the Articles of

Chriſt's deſcent into [redacted]

AND

Riſing again from the Dead.

IN A

SERMON,

Preach'd in the Pariſh Church of *Bridgewater*, on *Eaſter-Day*, Anno Domini, 1697.

By *WILLIAM ALLEN*, [redacted]. Vicar of *Bridgewater*, in *Somerſet*.

What will this Babler ſay? becauſe he Preached unto them Jeſus, and the Reſurrection, Acts 17. 18.

Am I therefore become your Enemy, becauſe I tell you the Truth, Gal. 4. 16.

London, Printed for *J. Taylor*, at the *Ship* in St. *Paul's*-*Church-Yard*; and *J. Miller* Bookſeller in *Sherborne*, and at his Shop in *Teavill*, 1697.

TO

JOHN HARVEY,

Of the

Caſtle in *Bridgewater*, Gent.

TIS a Priviledge that the Country Miniſters are bleſs'd with, above your great Towns Vicars or Lecturers, that their People, remembring their Catechiſms, preſume not to think themſelves more Learned or Wiſer than their Teachers; but according to Chriſtian Primitive Modeſty and Doctrine, they Learn of, and Obey, Reverence, and are Ruled by their Spiritual Paſtors. But your Corporation *Catechumens*, your Men of *Gath*, are big of themſelves, eſpecially if Opulent and Thriving, and will not allow Maſter *Parſon*, whether he belongs to Church or Conventicle, [for that's the diminitive word they ſcornfully Salute with the Levitical Order, whether in Gown, and Caſſock, or in Coat and long Cloak] they will not, I ſay, allow them ſo much as to think other-

wiſe than they think, nor to ſpeak otherwiſe than they would have them ſpeak; nor grant that their Univerſity Education, or much Study, or many years Exerciſe in the Miniſtry, gives them any aſcendant above their Level. If they will not ſay their *Pater-Noſter* the way they would have them, they ſhall have no *Peter*'s Pence from them. Thus ſtands the Caſe of your Town and City Clergy. And ſome of the Sons of the Church, I am loath to think them Sons of *Belial*, but they have appear'd ſuch Sons of ſtrife and ſtiffneſs, as indeed provok'd me, againſt mine inclination, to publiſh the following Sermon; at the Preaching of which, two of your diſcontented Pew-Mates carried themſelves (as at other times ever ſince the * Revolution) with all the proud and inſolent contempt imaginable: yea and in ſeeming great rage and wrath quitted the Congregation, as if I had been about overturning Foundations, *and deny'd the Faith once deliver'd to the Saints*; and were running apace to the Diſſenters, and was doing their work.

* *Tho' they have very early taken the Oaths to K. W. and Q. M.*

This is the Charge, and this is the Crime; and I think it a very great one too, if I ſhould *think*, ſay, or do any thing againſt the Church. But I have deliver'd no more than what you may read in the Biſhop of *Worceſter*'s Diſcourſe againſt the *Socinians*; or in Dr. *Lightfoot*, Biſhop *Peirſon*, Dr. *Towerſon*, and others of our Learned Church of *England*.

The

The Dedication.

The Diſſenters, as the *Novatians* of Old, may be right in their Doctrine, except in that which cauſes or occaſions their ſeparation. And I heartily wiſh all that are Zealous for, or againſt Ceremonies, were as warm for Peace, and Holineſs, Truth, and Concord; and that all of us, as Diſciples of the humble and holy Jeſus, under the Miniſtry of *Paul*, or *Apollo*, would as new-born-Babes deſire the ſincere Milk of the word, that we may grow thereby in Grace, and ſubſtantial Knowledge; which is the earneſt and ſincere Prayer of the Miniſter of the Pariſh, and Pariſh Church of *Bridgewater*; and therefore,

your very Humble Servant,

From my Study,

Bridgewater, *April*, 1697.

William Allen.

THE

THE PREFACE.

IT *was an early Cuſtom in the* Aſian *Church, and continues ſo to this very day* (ſays Sir *Paul Ricaut*) *for Chriſtians to Salute each other with this Chearful Congratulation on* Eaſter *Morning*: Chriſt is Riſen; *and the Return is,* Chriſt is Riſen indeed. *For 'twas a melancholy interval with Chriſt's firſt Diſciples, which he foretold them of,* that they ſhould *mourn, when the World did rejoyce. All the while the Son of Righteouſneſs was in an Eclipſe, his poor Diſciples were in a ſtate of darkneſs, and fear, and trouble, and almoſt deſpondency, as we may gather from their faint hopes in their way to* Emaus, Luke 24. 21. *We truſted* that *it* had been he which ſhould have redeemed Iſrael. *But in a farther Conference, our Saviour chides and rebukes them for their little confidence.* O Fools, and ſlow of Heart to believe all that the Prophets have ſpoken; *whereof this is one,* Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell, neither wilt thou ſuffer thy Holy One to ſee Corruption.

He deſcended into Hell, is one *of the Articles of that which we call the Apoſtle's Creed. Not that I believe it is* (in totidem verbis) *any more the Apoſtle's-Creed, than it is yours, or mine. Indeed there was a certain Writer tells us a Story; That the Apoſtles, before their parting from* Jeruſalem,

Jeruſalem, *into the ſeveral parts of the World to Preach the Goſpel, agreed upon a form of Chriſtian Faith; and that every one caſt in his* Symbolum, *or Article, which made juſt Twelve. But for this, we have only this one Man's word, but all the other Ancients know nothing of this Matter. Or that the preſent Creed, commonly call'd the* Apoſtle's-Creed, *was, as* Ruffinus *reports, theirs. All the Learned now a-days, in Church-Hiſtory, are agreed it was never compoſed by them. Not but that there was a form of ſound words, but not as now. Some were derived from the Apoſtles, or from their days. As,* I Believe in God the Father; *Or, as the Greeks read it, in* One *God the* Father, *in oppoſition to the Polytheiſm of the Heathens;* And in Jeſus Chriſt his only begotten Son our Lord; I Believe in the Holy Ghoſt, the Reſurrection of the Body, and the Life Everlaſting. *Theſe are all we can call Primitive from the Apoſtles. Tho' all the other are true, yet the others were added ſince in oppoſition to Hereſies, as they ſprang up in the Church. As,* was Conceiv'd by the Holy Ghoſt, *was put in in oppoſition to the* Carpocratians, Ebonites, *and* Corinthians, *who taught that Chriſt was born in the ordinary and common way as other Men and Women are.* Was Born of the Virgin *Mary,* Suffer'd under *Pontius Pilate, was placed in the Creed in contradiction to the* Docetæ, Simonians, *and others; who affirmed Chriſt to be a Man, not really, but phantaſtically, and in appearance. I believe the* Remiſſion of Sins *was added to the form of words againſt the* Baſilidians, *and*

Novatians.

Novatians. *They only held that not all Sins, but only involuntary ones would be remitted. The other deny'd remiſſion to the lapſed. But to come more immediately to my Theam, and to trace no longer the reſt. The Article of the* deſcent into Hell, *was brought in toward the latter end of the Fourth Century. From this account of the Creed, I may again aſſume my aſſertion; that, that we commonly call the Apoſtles, as it ſtands in our Liturgy, is no more their Creed, than it is mine, or yours. That is, you and I believe all theſe Articles, becauſe they are in the Scriptures, and may be proved from them; which is our Rule to prove that called the Apoſtle's-Creed by; and particularly that of Chriſt's* deſcent into Hell, *which is founded upon this Text,*

Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell, neither wilt thou ſuffer thy Holy One to ſee Corruption.

ACTS II. 27.

Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell, neither wilt thou ſuffer thy Holy One to ſee Corruption.

SAint *Peter*, in a ſhort but notable Sermon, demonſtrates *Jeſus* to be the *Meſſias*. The Holy One of God. The Lord, the Chriſt. *Firſt*, From the Miracles he did in his Life-time; they being witneſſes of the ſame, *v.* 22. *Secondly*, By the fulfilling of Prophecy; in being not only rejected by his own, but Crucified by them, according to the *determinate Counſel of God*, *ver.* 23. *Thirdly*, From the Wonders he did, not in Life only, but in Death; he brake thro' the bonds of it; the Grave could not detain his Body, nor *Hades* his Soul. And this according to Prophecy, and Promiſe, *Pſal.* 16. v. 10. Which is the Apoſtle's Quotation, and my Text. And the Doctrine or Article of Faith grounded upon it, is this. 'That Jeſus, the Chriſt and 'Saviour of the World made a Sacrifice for Sin, and, 'actually dead and buried, went into the Region of 'Spirits, but returned ſpeedily from thence, and reaſ-'ſuming his Body, roſe victoriouſly from the Grave.

In diſcuſſing this Doctrine, I will ſhew,

(1.) What is the meaning of Chriſt's Soul being in Hell.

(2.) The Reaſon and Occaſion of this Article being inſerted in our Creed.

(3.) The Incorruptibility of his Body, *it did not ſee Corruption.* Tho' the *Jews* gave its Death-wounds; yet the wounds putrified not. Together with the Uſe we ought to make of theſe Conſiderations.

I ſhall not mention the various Opinions about this Article; they rather diſgrace than inſtruct; but ſpeak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and that as conciſely and clearly as I can.

(1.) What is the meaning of Chriſt's Soul being in Hell For, with reſpect to his Godhead, we may ſay of him in the words of the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 139. 7, 8. *Whither ſhall I go from thy Spirit? whither ſhall I flee from thy preſence? If I aſcend up into Heaven, thou art there. If I make my bed in Hell, behold thou art there.* But our Diſcourſe is of the Soul of the *Meſſias*, and that was for a while in Hell. Not in the ſenſe the Damn'd are, who are in a State of Torment, in a Region of Woe and Miſery, which is full of Flame and Fire; as the Rich Man roars out in the Text, *Luke* 16. 24. *Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and ſend Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.* But the Soul of the *Meſſias*, when he gave up his Ghoſt, paſſed into the Receptacle of Bleſſed Souls, into that Paradiſe where the Redeemed and Pardoned are Lodged, and where with him went the Repenting Thief on the Croſs,

Croſs, *Luke* 23. 43. *This day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe.*

'Tis this Receptacle of good Souls, this Paradiſe for thoſe that die in Chriſt, that is called *Hades*; that is, an inviſible State, a Being, tho' in a remote Region, which Eye cannot reach or penetrate.

I confeſs 'tis a hard matter to beat out of the vulgar Heads the groſs conception of the word Hell, which ſounds to them no other than horrour, and blackneſs of darkneſs, and fire and brimſtone. The word Hell in our Engliſh is harſh and dreadful, and ſpeaks to us the place of the Damn'd: *D. *Lightfoot.*

'A *place very improper to look for the Soul of Chriſt, 'when departed out of his Body, for Him and His Be-'trayer *Judas* to meet in the ſame place. He that had 'by Death purchaſed Heaven for others, himſelf after 'death to deſcend into Hell.

This therefore cannot be; no, is not the meaning of the word *Hell* where Chriſt went; he came not near that Abyſs, nor was at all among thoſe Reprobated Crew. The word *Hell*, is a word of Latitude, and hath a larger ſignification, as all that underſtand *Greek* know: And I cou'd wiſh, for the ſake of the People, we cou'd find a ſofter and more expreſſive word to ſpeak in: for the true, eaſie, and natural ſenſe of *Hades*, is an inviſible Region, the Manſion of bleſſed Souls, which in Scripture is called *Paradiſe*, *Heaven*, *Abraham's-boſom.*

Object. If *Hades* means Paradiſe, why ſhould Chriſt pray againſt his being left in *Hades*, and hope that his Soul ſhall not be left in *Hades*, as he hopes his Body ſhall not ſee Corruption?

Anſw. He doth not pray thus, as if it were not well with his Soul in *Hades*, as to what he enjoyed: For his Soul was the Soul of the *Meſſias*, the Soul of a Redeemer, a Soul that was to Conquer Death, and not to ſtay any conſiderable time from his Body born of the Virgin *Mary*. He had work to do which other Souls had not; he was to riſe for others juſtification. He was to aſcend into the Holy of Holieſt, as the great High-Prieſt of our Souls; and therefore he muſt return to his Body, that he may as God-Man in Humane fleſh for ever enter into the Vale. As if he ſhould ſay, thou wilt not leave me under Death; that is, my Soul in ſeparation: This wou'd be the triumph of the Devil. But tho' the *Meſſias*'s Soul, when in its ſeparation, was in Bliſs; and all Holy Souls departed are ſo; yet Chriſt's Soul had an undertaking that ſurmounted that of all Humane Souls; and therefore, to accompliſh that, he prays for the fulfilling of the Promiſe: That tho' his Soul, as others of Humane Kind, were really ſeparated, yet that *his* might ſpeedily be re-united, for the perfecting of the work he took upon him the form of a Servant, and came into the Body at firſt.

Secondly, The Occaſion and Reaſon of this Article being

being inſerted in our Creed. Not that it was there at firſt, but it came in afterward, and that occaſion'd by a new Hereſie that ſtarted up in the Church; and therefore to obviate that, this Article was added as a Truth proveable from Scripture, that Chriſt went into *Hades*.

The Errour was this, that Chriſt had no proper Intellectual, or Rational Soul. Which Hereſie was begun and propagated by one *Appolonius*, and his Followers. That the Word, or the Divinity, ſupplied the place of a Soul, and that therefore he was not properly dead when his Body was in the Grave. But in oppoſition to this Error, the Chriſtians aſſert that Chriſt had a humane Soul, that it underwent all the Offices of one in the Body, and out of the Body, of a humane Soul: that firſt it was infuſed as other Souls are, when a Body was prepared; and when in the Body, it actuated as other Souls, by opening and enlarging its faculties, as the Body grew in ſtature, and the Man in years; and he hungred and thirſted as other Men did, the Union of his Soul and Body being to be preſerv'd by the ſame aliment that others were: And when he was Crucified, and by the pains of that diſpoſed for a reſignation of his Spirit, he gave it up to God, and waited upon his diſpoſal of it. For all Souls are to return to the Father of Spirits, to be conſign'd to the ſtate or place they are meet for: And the Soul of the *Meſſias* went to the Apartment of ſeparated Souls, that is of Good and Righteous ones.

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The improvement we make of this Article, and Doctrine of Faith, is as follows.

(1.) That we are aſſured that we *Are*, when we go hence: And the Diſciples of Chriſt go to Paradiſe, as he did: I do not ſay they go into the Heaven of Heavens, for that Chriſt did not himſelf, 'till he reaſſum'd his Body. But when they are not as to mortal Eye, they ſhall *Be*. So our Saviour told the repenting Thief, *This day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe*; thy Soul and mine ſhall go together to the Aſſembly of the firſt-born: The diſſolution of our Bodies ſhall not break off our Being; the Soul, the better part, *Is*; even in the ſtate of ſeparation. The duſt muſt return to duſt, but the Soul returns to God, to be diſpoſed of to its appointed Manſion. The Soul of the *Meſſias* went to *Hades*, the Congregation of the Juſt, the Receptacle of Bleſſed Spirits, the Reſt that remains for the People of God, 'till they are recalled to take up their Bodies. They enter into reſt, not a ceſſation of Being, or a reſt of ſleep, 'till the awaking at the ſound of the laſt Trump, *the dream of ſome*. But they reſt in hope, they live in a joyful expectation of a more glorious appearance. They are cloath'd upon from above, as ſoon as they go out of the Body. But they await under that cloathing, be it what it will, for their firſt Bodies to be made like Chriſt's glorious Body. They reſt from ſin and ſorrow, and all the ill Concomitants of a mortal Body; but yet are vigorous

and

and lively, and in poſſeſſion of a happineſs that deſerves the name of Heaven and Paradiſe; tho' even in that ſtate it may be ſaid, what St. *John* ſays of the Sons of God *here, that it doth not ſo fully appear*, even there, *what they ſhall be*: But yet there, as here, they have this aſſurance, that *when Chriſt who is our life ſhall appear*, then ſhall *they* and *we apppear with him in Glory*. Our Saviour's return to re-aſſume his Body, gave an Ocular demonſtration of the Immortality both of Body and Soul. The Immortality of the Soul was not ſo much queſtion'd; but that of the Body, and the Reſurrection of that, was ridicul'd. *Acts* 17. 18. And ſo in after times, as I find in an Ancient Chriſtian Writer. But Chriſt's Soul came into his Body, and by that he gave us aſſurance of the whole Man's appearing again in Body and Soul. The Body ſhall not always be in the Grave, nor the Soul be without its old Companion; with theſe Eyes ſhall we again ſee our Redeemer. This Doctrine is peculiarly the Revelation of the Goſpel. The Philoſophy of the *Gentiles* could not reach it. A thouſand difficulties they raiſe againſt the poſſibility of it: but what Chriſt did for himſelf, he will do for his followers. He follow'd the Spirits of Juſt Men into *their ſtate*, after *their* ſeparation from the Body, and he will bring them and their Souls back again to their Bodies, and he will give them again their former Tabernacles or Abodes; and the Organs of

Minutius Felix.

thoſe

thoſe of them that ſleep in Jeſus ſhall be awakened, and their ſcatter'd Atoms ſhall be recalled to make up the whole *Compoſitum*, Body and Soul; and as Men in Bodies they ſhall ever be with the Lord.

Thirdly, A God Incarnate takes actual care both of our Bodies and Souls, in every ſtate after we come into the Body; in Life, in Death, and after Death.

A God Incarnate, I ſay; for ſo was the Lord of Glory that was Crucified for us, that Died, and roſe again from the Dead. Not that God could die, but the Nature he was Hypoſtatically united to, ſuffer'd a ſeparation; and he himſelf re-aſſumed his Body, and by the power of his Divinity returned from *Hades*.

Deſtroy this Temple, and in three days I will raiſe it up, Joh. 2. 19. *He ſpake of the Temple of his Body.* v. 21. *Therefore doth the Father love me, becauſe I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of my ſelf: I have power to take it again, John* 10. 17, 18. And this Power he exerts not only for himſelf, but all his Followers; he is with them in Life, in Death; in the Body, and out of the Body. He dwells with them by his Spirit, while in the Tabernacle of the Fleſh; and when out of the Body, they are with the Lord. He beams his Light of Glory into the Regions they are in, for a while, as ſeparate from the Body; he never leaves them nor forſakes them. *James*, and *John*, and *Peter*, ſaw his transfiguration on the Mount, and were tranſported into extaſie,

extaſie; in ſo much that St. *Peter* crys out, *'tis good to be here* He was ſo raviſh'd as not to think of any other after-glory, he was ſo well contented with *that*, *Matth.* 17. 2. St. *Stephen*, under a ſhower of Stones, *looked up ſtedfaſtly into Heaven, and ſaw the glory of God, and Jeſus ſtanding on the right hand of God. Acts* 7. 55. And ſome ſuch like manifeſtations ſeparate Souls have of their glorified Saviour, which makes them wait with joy for a farther Salvation.

Fourthly, That a Separation hereafter will be ever made, betwixt the Righteous and Unrighteous. Our Saviour in the ſtate of Separation had nothing to do with the Damn'd; he gave them no viſit, he was none of their Company, he made not up one of their number; he went not into Hell in this ſenſe. They that are inclinable to take the Doctrine in the groſſer ſenſe, yet do not underſtand it of his being pain'd or puniſh'd with the Damn'd. But rather that he conſign'd them the more firmly in their ſtate of horrour and darkneſs; and that he triumph'd over Devils, only as upbraiding them of their Apoſtacy, and falling from their ſtation; and reproaching all Spirits in their Apoſtacy, for the ſame Rebellion, and *binding them up in Chains of Darkneſs 'till the judgment of the great Day.* But the true and brighter ſide of the Article, is to encourage, comfort, and confirm the *Spirits* of the Righteous with the hopes of a greater and farther glorification, and of a nearer approach to the Eternal Majeſty, when

he ſhall come again to give up the Kingdom unto the Father, when he and they ſhall ever be with the Lord.

Fifthly, Nothing ſhall with-hold us from returning unto the Body, when the time of re-union comes. Nothing hinders the good Soul from entring into Paradiſe. The Angels, that pitch their Tents about them that fear God in their life time, while in their Bodies, and who are Miniſtring Spirits to thoſe that are Heirs of Salvation; do at the moment of their ſeparation from their Bodies, await the good Soul's coming forth, and immediately guard it through the Region of the Air, the Principality of *Dæmons*, into thoſe Bleſſed Abodes, where good Souls await the redemption of the Body, by a Reſurrection and Reunion. Thus we read of *Lazarus's Soul being carried by Angels into Abraham's boſom*, *Luke* 16. 22. I need urge no more on this Head, with reference to the Followers of Jeſus in the Regeneration, for their aſſurance of following him in Life, in Death, and after Death; than the great and triumphant Challenge and Concluſion of the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 8. 34, 39. Wherefore let us comfort one another with theſe words, *Chriſt is Riſen*; or rather with theſe of the Apoſtle, appoſite to my Sermon, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 15, 16, 17, 18. *For if we believe that Jeſus died, and roſe again: even ſo them alſo which believe in Jeſus, will God bring with him. For this we ſay unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive,*

alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, ſhall not prevent them which are aſleep. For the Lord himſelf ſhall deſcend from Heaven with a ſhout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the Trump of God: and the Dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt. Then we which are alive, and remain, ſhall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and ſo ſhall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with theſe words.

You ſhall, as your Redeemer's Soul, go into Paradiſe; but that is not your Eternal Reſt. It is a Manſion, but not the Everlaſting Kingdom that is yet to come; and Chriſt will come to carry all and every of you, both Body and Soul, into the Kingdom prepared for you. *Wherefore comfort one auother with theſe words.*

Thirdly, The incorruptibility of his Body; it was not to ſee Corruption. Tho' the Jews [*or Souldiers*] gave him his death-wounds, yet they did not feſter, nor his Body ſee Corruption. The immaculate Lamb was without ſpot, he was pierced, but he was not putrified; he was butcher'd, but not blemiſh'd; his Body was caſt into the Grave, but it did not ſee Corruption. *Worms* were neither *his Brothers* or *Siſters*; his Body was of a purer make, and had none of that taint that could attract ſuch Vermin. But tho' this may look plauſibly, yet it is not powerful without proof. I ſhall therefore, beſides my Text, repreſent to you

ſome Conſiderations why Chriſt's Body was not to ſee Corruption.

Firſt, Becauſe he was in three days to re-aſſume it, according to Promiſe, and his own Prediction: He that laid it down, had power, and *time* preſcribed by himſelf to take it up; and that he limited according to the Laws of Nature: I mean of material Nature; becauſe after ſuch a Seaſon of Stagnation, and Incirculation of Animal Spirits, according to the Laws of motion, the Body would Corrupt: A piece of Philoſophy we read a Woman's Capacity reach'd to; as in the inſtance of *Lazarus*'s Body being in the Grave. *Martha, the Siſter of him that was dead, ſaid unto him, Lord, by this time he ſtinketh, for he hath been dead four days. Joh.* 11. 33. The time of our Saviour's Body's being in the Grave was therefore prefix'd. And as a Bone of him was not to be broken, according to the Text: So neither was his Body to ſee Corruption. This he often intimated to his Diſciples, tho' they were dull of hearing, or underſtood not his Sayings.

They would not believe that he muſt die, that he muſt be Crucified, *and the third day riſe again*; though he had very ſeriouſly and ſolemnly Preach'd this Doctrine to them, and that too as an Evidence of his being the *Meſſias*, deliver'd in the Scriptures. But, as he upbraids them after his Reſurrection, *They were ſlow of heart to believe what the Prophets had ſaid of him, and what he had ſaid unto them, Luke* 21. 25.

Which

Which is proof to us, that his Body was not to ſee Corruption. For why ſhould he chide them for their diſtruſt and their unbelief, but that it was a thing they ought to have believ'd, that the Body of the *Meſſias* was not to ſee Corruption? His Body, in this ſenſe, was not to be a Mortal Body, as ours, to return to Duſt. That was the melancholly Sentence paſt on the Poſterity of *Adam*, but not to reach him that is the ſecond *Adam*; who was tho' the Son of *Adam*, as ſays St. *Luke*; yet not according to an ordinary Generation. His Mother knew not *Joſeph*, nor was he Conceiv'd after the manner of Men; and whatever the Virgin *Mary* was, he was not born in Original Sin. But of this more under the ſubſequent Conſideration.

He that laid down his Earthly Tabernacle, had power to raiſe it up again; and he would ſtay no longer in the Region of Spirits, when he ſaw it was time for him to return to his Body, from the beginning prepared for him; which he was in every ſenſe to keep immaculate.

He had ſaid, *deſtroy this Temple, and in three days I will raiſe it up again*; and he ſpake, ſays the Text, of the *Temple his Body*, John 2. 21. All the whole ſtreſs of his Undertaking lay upon *this*, of his raiſing his Body. No body would have believ'd him, had he not rais'd his Body. This was the main Point that kept ſuch a ſtir in *Jeruſalem*, that rais'd the *Scribes* and *Phariſees all* in an uproar, that the Body they Crucified

fied was riſen again. They took all the pains, and made uſe of all the craft imaginable to ſuppreſs the Report. They perſecute the Diſciples at a grievous rate, for their preaching and publiſhing the truth of his Reſurrection. They own that he had ſaid ſo, that he would raiſe his Body again. *We remember what that Deceiver ſaid while he was yet alive, after three days will I riſe again*, Matth. 27. 63. And they would fain make him a Liar, and his Diſciples too; and to that end they tamper with the Souldiers. *They gave large money unto the Souldiers, ſaying, ſay ye his Diſciples came by night, and ſtole him away while we ſlept.* *Matth.* 28. 12, 13. But he that was the Truth, was the Life, the Life to his own Body; he came back with his Spirit, and quickned it again. And according to Promiſe, and Prediction, made good his word of both, and *roſe the third day.* But we go on to Conſider,

Secondly, His Body was not to ſee Corruption; becauſe he was the ſecond *Adam*, and was not under the guilt of the firſt. He was the Lord from Heaven, and the Lord of Glory; and his Body was to be a glorious Body. His Body was never ſtain'd by Sin or Sickneſs, and his Death-wounds only open'd a paſſage for his Spirit; but the Cabinet, tho' broken or bruiſed, was not disjoynted; the Temple was deſtroy'd without diſlocation of any part, or fracture of any joynt, and the whole *compages* remain'd ſound and ſafe, 'till the good

Soul

Soul return'd to put the Organs again in tune. The firſt *Adam* brought in Sin and Death into the World; the ſecond, Life, and Immortality: An Argument which the Apoſtle purſues, in 1 *Cor.* 15. 47. *The firſt Man is of the Earth, Earthy; the ſecond Man is the Lord from Heaven.* Our Bodies muſt to Duſt, or Earth; becauſe they were made of Duſt. They muſt moulder, becauſe they are Mortal. Our Natures, as derivative from a Sinner, are decreed to death and diſſolution, and muſt ſink into the ſame Principle of which they are compounded; *but the ſecond Man is the Lord from Heaven*; the Lord of Life and Immortality. He doth not bring Death, but Life to Body and Soul. And therefore, in *v.* 45. the Apoſtle ſtiles him a *quickning Spirit*; keeping his Body tenantable, tho' he went out of it; and not only ſo, but he was Lord of his own Body, and none other had Power and Dominion over it. None, nor any thing, could aſſault his Body laid up as in a Repoſitory for his returning.

It ſeems by what we read in the Hiſtory of the Goſpel, he put a Life-guard of Angels upon it, or about it, while he went into a far Country; *which frighted both the Souldiers, and Devout Women that came to his Sepulchre to look after him*, Luke 24. 4.

The *Socinians* here banter and batter this Bulwark of our Faith, by aſſerting that Chriſt had no power of his Body; that, when dead, and in the Grave, was out of his Care or Concern. That 'twas God kept his Body incor-

incorruptible, and rais'd it ſuch. It was God the Father that took care of the Body and Soul of God the Son. We yield this; but he was ſuch a Son of God as dwelt in Fleſh, not after the manner of the firſt *Adam's* Progeny. His Body was of a finer make, and purer mould; *conceiv'd of the Holy Ghoſt, and born of the Virgin*, and ſo had the Seeds of Immortality in it; and was not to corrupt, tho' the Inmate was for a while to remove. God the Father did indeed raiſe Chriſt from the dead, as we read, *Gal.* 1. 1. But it's alſo written, that Chriſt alſo did raiſe himſelf. *Joh.* 2. 21. *Deſtroy this Temple, and I will raiſe it again.* Where he ſpeaks *of the Temple of his Body*: Which he might very properly call a Temple, becauſe the fullneſs of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily. And in Scripture we are inform'd, That *when he was riſen from the dead, his Diſciples remembred that he had ſaid this unto them; and they believ'd the Scripture, and the word that Jeſus had ſaid*: That Chriſt took care of his own Body, and rais'd himſelf: For 'tis written, *Joh.* 5. 21. *As the Father raiſeth up the dead*, and *quickneth them, even ſo the Son quickneth whom he will.* He then which quickneth the dead Bodies of others, when he raiſeth them; he alſo quickned his own Body, when he raiſed that.

Thirdly, and laſtly. His body was not to ſee Corruption; becauſe he was, as the Chriſtian High-Prieſt, to enter into the Holy of Holieſt, as the firſt-fruits of the Dead. So our Apologiſt St. *Peter*, v. 29, *&c.* of this Chapter,

Chapter, *Men and Brethren, let me freely ſpeak unto you of the Patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his Sepulchre is with us unto this day; therefore being a Prophet, and knowing that God had ſworn with an Oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins according to the fleſh, he would raiſe up Chriſt to ſit on his Throne: He ſeeing this before, ſpake of the Reſurrection of Chriſt, that his Soul was not left in Hell, neither his fleſh did ſee Corruption.*

This Spiritual High-Prieſt muſt enter into the Holy of Holieſt, with all his *Pontificalibus*; his Body and Soul Clean, and Clear, Pure, and Perfect, Radiant, and Glorious; the true *Regalia* that adorn'd the Inveſtiture of this High-Prieſt. He was alſo to riſe as the firſt fruits, the Cauſe and Pledge of all others Reſurrection. Afterwards they that are Chriſt's; even Holy and Pious Men ſhall be raiſed up, but not immediately, for their Bodies muſt remain in the Grave, and their Souls in *Hades*, 'till he calls them. They muſt ſee Corruption, and pay the debt of a corrupt Nature, and undergo the Pennance of the Grave, and *Hades*. Not that they feel pain in the one, or the other; but they willingly reſign to the Divine Decree, and for a while reſt in hope of a glorious Redemption. For the bonds of Death were unlooſed by the Captain of our Salvation, but they were ſuch bonds as did not fetter; they were willingly put on, and eaſily put off. The Chriſtian High-Prieſt was to be a Freeman, not a Priſoner;

ſoner; he was not to enter with Shackles, but rather with the Armature of a glorious Victor, *Eph.* 6. 13. *&c. With the whole Armour of God, with the Breſt-plate of Righteouſneſs, with the Shield of Faith, with the Helmet of Salvation, with the Sword of the Spirit,* by which he ſtood in the day of trial, and withſtood the fiery Darts of the Wicked, and cut in ſunder the bonds of Death.

To allude to the Apoſtle's Phraſe.

From theſe Conſiderations, we may conclude his Body could not ſee Corruption. (1.) Becauſe in three days, according to Promiſe and Prediction, he was to aſſume his Body. (2.) Becauſe he was the ſecond *Adam*, and ſo he was not under the guilt or the penalty of the firſt. (3.) Becauſe he as the High-Prieſt, was to enter Body and Soul pure as the *Æther*, into the Everlaſting Kingdom, the Regions of Light and Glory.

The Doctrinal part of this Sermon ſpeaks Comfort to us all, words of great Conſolation, that ſhould enliven us, and fill us with joy in believing.

For *Firſt*, The ſame Lord Jeſus that raiſed and reaſſumed his own Body, ſhall raiſe ours, and *make them like his Glorious Body, Phil.* 3. 21. It is the Faith of all Orthodox Divines, that had the firſt *Adam* ſtood, we had ſtood in him, in his integrity, in a perfect and holy Nature, and in the favour of God. And that after the expiration of a determinate time, our Bodies and Souls had been tranſlated as *Enoch*'s and *Elias*'s, without

without ſeeing Death, into a ſtate of Immortality. But what we loſt by the firſt Man's prevarication, will be beyond our deſerts, reſtored by the ſecond *Adam*. *And as in Adam all died, ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.* All are to live, but ſome to the Reſurrection of the Juſt, whoſe Bodies ſhall be made like Chriſt's glorious Body. The ſecond *Adam*, ſay you, who is he? Why *the ſeed of the Woman, that ſhould bruiſe the Serpent's head*, Gen. 3. That Seed in whom all the Nations of the Earth are bleſſed. The ſecond *Adam*, in whom, and by whom, a new Covenant of Grace is made for bleſſings in this World, and far greater in another, *that now we might have life, and that more abundantly*; the life of Grace, and hereafter the life of Glory. This is the Chriſt whoſe Body did not ſee Corruption, nor his Soul remain among the Dead; of whom all the Prophets ſpake, of whom the World hath from all Ages rung to all Nations. Tho' indeed the great expectation of him was eminently and more explicitely kept alive amongſt God's own People the *Jews*, before his coming into the World. And they did look for ſuch a one; and tho' when he did come, they rejected him, yet ſuch a one they did and do ſtill expect.

But we are convinc'd that Chriſt is that ſecond *Adam*, and he hath fulfilled all Prophecies, and all Righteouſneſs; and that very ſame Jeſus that was Crucified at *Jeruſalem*, under *Pontius Pilate* (being then the *Roman* Procurator) is the Chriſt, the promis'd Seed;

and is, as himſelf ſays, the *Reſurrection from the Dead*, or *He* that ſhall raiſe the Dead. And therefore we are aſſur'd that our Bodies ſhall be raiſed, and that more eſpecially,

Secondly, Becauſe Chriſt is our Lord, he hath Redeemed our Bodies by his precious blood, and he Sacrificed his Body for ours, and we have dedicated our Bodies to him, and he is Lord of our Bodies. And as Lord of them he will appear again in the Body he appear'd in on Earth, in the Body he aſcended up into Heaven; in that Body *ſhall he come again to judge the quick and the dead*, and therefore in our Bodies ſhall we ariſe to meet our Lord, yea our Redeemer, and mighty Saviour. *For he will command the Sea to give up its dead, and the Earth to give up its.* Not only our Souls, but our Bodies are Redeemed by him from the Grave, and here is the ſtate of the Dead.

He had not aſſumed a Body, nor ſuffer'd in his Body, nor riſen again with his Body, but for the benefit of us, otherwiſe Eternally Mortal and loſt Creatures in Body and Soul; *That our Bodies may be made like his glorious Body, and that both Bodies and Souls may ever be with the Lord.* And for a confirmation of this, we conſider farther,

Thirdly, That Chriſt rais'd his own Body. But how know we this, ſay you? But then, ſay I, would it be ſatisfactory if you had ſeen it? Would you have believ'd, if you had convers'd with him after he did riſe from

from the Dead: So fancied the Rich Man in Hell; but you remember what our Saviour return'd to his Requeſt, *Luke* 16. 31. *If they hear not Moſes and the Prophets, neither will they be perſwaded tho' one roſe from the Dead.* You have *Moſes* and the Prophets, the Scriptures are your Light and Lanthorn, the Relation of the *Evangeliſts* and the *Apoſtles* are your Credentials; what hath in this matter been tranſmitted down from Age to Age for theſe Sixteen Hundred Years and upwards are your Teſtimonials. And if after all the Witneſſes of the Church of God, and the Minds of Martyrs, we will not yet believe, tho' we ſaw before our Eyes a preſent Reſurrection. The *Jews* did not in the Caſe of *Lazarus*. But I am not Preaching to Infidels, but Believers; and we know that becauſe Chriſt is riſen, we alſo ſhall ariſe, and our Bodies ſhall be made like Chriſt's Body. For,

Fourthly, Chriſt will do this great Work, by taking away all thoſe Corruptible Qualities and Infirmities to which our Bodies are liable, both living and dead. Εἰς τὸ γενέσθαι αὐτὸ, That this vile Body may be refin'd, and freed from decay, being made like the Glorified Body of Jeſus after the Reſurrection. Hence ſome have Critically, if not too curiouſly, affirm'd, That the Infant, and the Aged, and all others, ſhall at the Reſurrection appear in their Bodies, of the ſame youthfulneſs with that which Chriſt laid down, and roſe again in. I can't be poſitive in that, but we may ſay more

more to the purpoſe, when we ſay that our Bodies ſhall be like Chriſt's glorious Body. *i. e.* Bodies freed from the corruption of Matter, the blemiſhes of Age, and the greater ſtain of Sin; Bodies that ſhall be made capable of mounting aloft. And this will be eaſily effected, if we conſider,

Fifthly, The Inſtrument by which our Lord ſhall effect this Wonder, even by his Omnipotence.

Why, ſays the ſame Apoſtle, ſhould it *be thought impoſſible that God ſhould raiſe the Dead?*

The Chymiſts tell us for certain, that the Particles of a reſolv'd Body may retain their own Nature under various alterations, and diſguiſes, of which it is poſſible they may be ſtript, and that without making a Humane Body ceaſe to be the ſame; it may be repaired, and augmented, by the adaption of congruouſly diſpoſed Matter: Which Philoſophy ſolves the difficulty of the loſs of Body into Earth, and from thence to Graſs, and from Graſs, to Chyle in the Ox or the Sheep's Belly, and from thence into food again for Man; ſo that thro' a ſucceſſive Tranſmigration, the Body of Man becomes that of another. But why ſhould it be thought impoſſible that a moſt intelligent Agent, whoſe Omnipotence extends to all that is not contradictory to the nature of things, or of his own, ſhould be able ſo to order and watch the Particles of a Humane Body, as that a compleat number may be preſerv'd, and retriev'd; ſo that ſtripping them of their

their diſguiſes, or extricating them from other parts of Matter, to which they may happen to be conjoyn'd, he may re-unite them betwixt themſelves, and if need be, with Particles of Matter fit to be contexted with them; which being united with the former Soul, may in a ſenſe conſonant to the Expreſſions of Scripture, re-compoſe the ſame Man whoſe Soul and Body were formerly dejoyn'd by Death. But if you enquire as *Nicodemus*, *How can theſe things be?* I can anſwer no other than what is already ſaid, unleſs it be in the words of our Saviour, to *Peter*'s impertinent enquiry: *What's that to thee, and I? Let us believe in God, believe alſo in Chriſt*, and be followers of him in the Regeneration, and we need not doubt of coming again, and appear at the Reſurrection of the Juſt.

For Laſtly, We conclude that a Spiritual Reſurrection in this Life, muſt precede the bleſſed and glorious Reſurrection to Eternal Life. 'Tis for the ſake of a raiſed Mind, that the Body ſhall be like Chriſt's glorious Body; for we muſt not expect to have a part in the Reſurrection of the *Juſt*, unleſs in this Life we commenſe ſuch Men.

The pure in Heart and the pure in Life ſhall only ſee God as their Redeemer with their bodily Eyes, or their intellectual ones.

If any are ſo wretched as to go out of this World with corrupt Affections, and an Earthy Heart, with brutiſh Minds, and ſordid Deſires, happy would it be if they

they could perish as the Beasts do. But, ah Lord! there is a lower descent for such Men. They shall not be blessed with the refuge and silence of a Grave. The Earth must give up its Dead, and after a while Earth must be no longer Earth, but Earth must to Hell, in the most dreadful sense and sound of the word. And without all question, at the great Conflagration, Bodies and Souls will be tumbled down into the devouring Fire, and the then Everlasting Flames. A corrupt Mind not only breeds a Worm that will continually gnaw, and that never dies, as our Saviour teaches, but it causes and leaves a sinful putrefaction in the Flesh, which remains after the Soul is fled, and will continue when the Soul returns; the torment of which will out-last the Corruption of the Grave, or the Doom-Days Fire, which neither the one or the other can consume or destroy.

Wherefore it concerns us all *now* to cleanse our selves from all filthiness of Flesh and Spirit. There's no Purgatory after this Life; that's a Dream, or a Doctrine rather [if you will] of some Crafty Priests, that make Gain their Godliness; and would perswade Men that they are Redeemed with Gold and Silver; against the express *Dogma* of St. *Peter*. *As the Tree falls, so it will lie. And if we sow to the Flesh, we shall of the Flesh reap Corruption.* But let us from the Considerations before offer'd, be provok'd, as the Philosopher, to bespeak our Souls after this manner. Χρὴ σὲ σπεύδειν πρὸς τὸ φαὸς καὶ πρὸς πατρὸς αὔγας εἴθηι ἐπεμφθὴ τοὶ ψυχὴ πολὺν ἐθημένη νῦν.

It becomes us, having a Glorious Hope for our Bodies and our Souls, to purifie our selves, as God is pure; to set our Affections on Things Above, and not on Things on Earth; to mortifie the deeds of the Body, and to mount and raise our Minds to the Cœlestial Regions, the pure *Æther*, the proper Mansions for all that are made meet to be Inheritors with the Saints in Light.

FINIS.